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The President's Daily Brief

November 9, 1976

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~~*Top Secret*~~25X1

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LEBANON: *Syrian troops, in their role as a contingent of the Arab League peacekeeping force, yesterday moved into two Christian-controlled villages in the Mount Lebanon area and took up positions near the leftist-held town of Alayh in their first steps to enforce the cease-fire agreed to last month.*

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Christian troops reportedly have already begun to withdraw from mountain areas. If Syrian efforts to enforce the cease-fire are successful, the Christians will pull back from contested areas along the Beirut confrontation line.

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FRANCE-PAKISTAN

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SOUTH KOREA: *The mood of President Pak's government has shifted in the past month or so from buoyant optimism to some concern over the immediate prospects for US-Korean relations.*

The US embassy comments that Seoul's greater confidence earlier this fall was based on at least four factors: a greater sense of security resulting from the outcome of the Panmunjom incident; the economic boom--South Korea's exports are up over 60 percent and the growth rate for the year is likely to be about 15 percent; North Korea's international setbacks--including the withdrawal of its UN resolution, defaulting on foreign debts, and the smuggling scandals in Scandinavia; and the dormant political opposition in Seoul.

This bright picture, from Pak's standpoint, has been clouded by apprehension that allegations of improper South Korean activities in the US will affect relations with the US. Pak has been particularly angered by reports linking him personally to alleged improprieties in the US and by allegations that South Korea is a target of US intelligence.

The government's uneasiness has been further increased by uncertainties about the policies of president-elect Carter. The government-controlled press is emphasizing, however, that the common security interests of the US and South Korea will prevent any sudden shifts in US policy.

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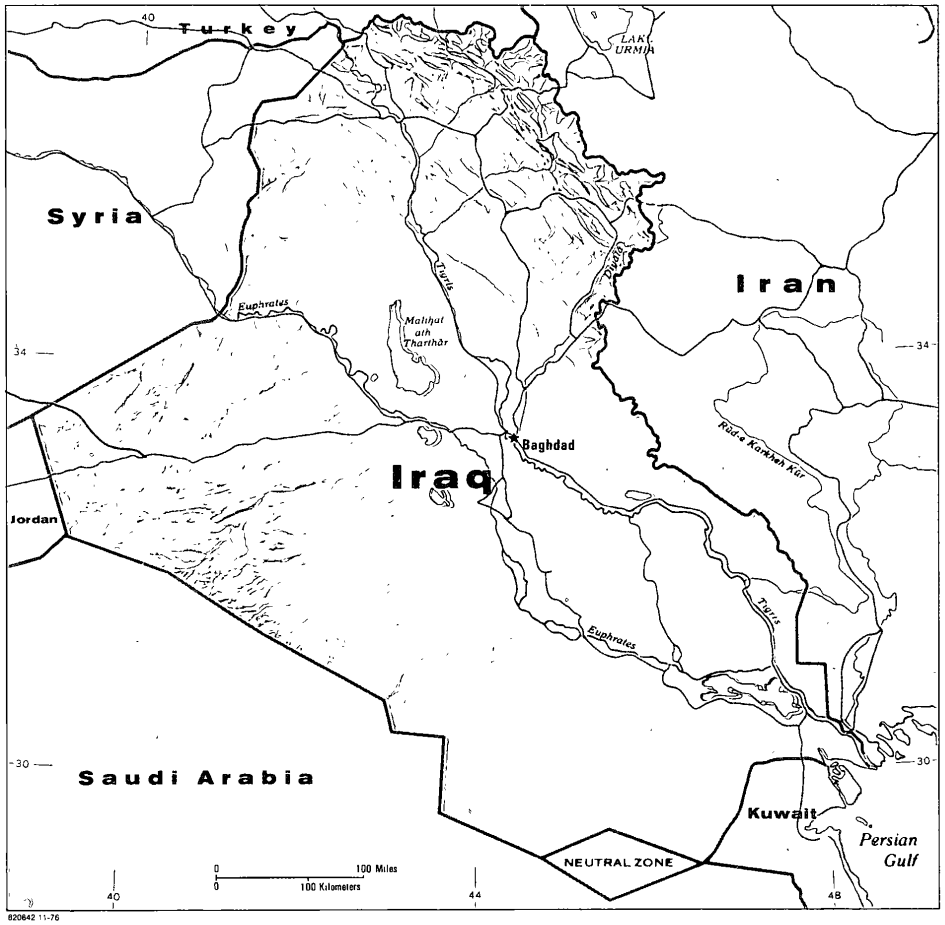

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NOTES

Kurdish guerrilla activity in northern Iraq *appears to be picking up momentum.*

The present, limited Kurdish insurgency is the work of the leftist Kurdish Democratic Union, based in the border area of northeastern Syria, and does not involve followers of Mulla Mustafa Barzani whose rebellion collapsed in March 1975. The increase in Kurdish activity over the past few months suggests that it may have been stimulated by Syria in retaliation for Iraq's military buildup in the border area last June.

Iraq has dispatched some 20,000 regular troops to the north to deal with the 20- to 50-man guerrilla bands and to seal the Syrian border from further infiltration of rebels. Fragmentary reporting suggests that the guerrillas total no more than 1,000.

* * *

Greece *has notified* NATO *that it is ready to return at least some of its nuclear-trained forces to allied command.*

While the decision represents a significant step toward returning Greek forces to NATO's integrated military structure, a clarification of Greece's status must await the outcome of negotiations.

The terms the Greeks have proposed for the recommitment of their air defense forces are more limited and qualified than those for similar forces of other allies. Some air defense units may have been omitted entirely. Greece apparently intends to insist on preserving its freedom of action in order to be able to deploy its forces to meet a potential threat from Turkey.

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Saudi Arabia is reportedly pulling its 5,600 troops out of Jordan, as planned several months ago.

The Saudis are reported to have informed the Jordanian government in July of the decision to withdraw the troops.

Both countries are publicly treating the Saudi pullout as part of Riyadh's plans to modernize its forces with Western equipment, although much of this equipment will not be available for some time. The US embassy in Jidda believes that Saudi Arabia may simply no longer see the need to station a token force in the confrontation area to demonstrate its leadership in the Arab world.

Last month, the Saudis withdrew some 5,900 men from Syria that had been stationed there since the October 1973 war. A small contingent of Saudi troops remains in Syria to support the 200-man Saudi peacekeeping force in Lebanon.

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